



The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

April 2, 2008

The Honorable Candace Bouchard, Chairwoman
House Public Works and Highways Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 201
Concord, NH 03301

RE: SB 396, establishing a statewide transportation policy.

Dear Chairwoman Bouchard,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify concerning SB 396, which would establish a statewide transportation policy that promotes transportation investments that support sustainable development patterns and strategies to increase the energy efficiency of the transportation system. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) supports the enactment of SB 396, because its provisions would significantly enhance the integration of environmental and land use planning considerations into the construction of public transportation facilities.

One of the greatest environmental challenges facing New Hampshire is the global climate change phenomenon that scientists have linked to large-scale generation of greenhouse gases, principally by the energy generation and transportation sectors of the world-wide economy. To play its role in addressing this problem, the State of New Hampshire must reduce the greenhouse gas contributions from these sectors to address global warming and meet regional climate change goals. The Legislature is currently considering the adoption of HB 1434, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which would cap, and then reduce, carbon dioxide emissions from large fossil-fueled power plants.

In the transportation sector, New Hampshire can do its part by minimizing the number of vehicle miles traveled, and, consequently, the total emissions from vehicles, through the increased travel efficiency that will result from the integrated transportation planning policies described in SB 396. The statewide transportation policy proposed by SB 396 would explicitly make the reduction of global warming effects an important consideration in New Hampshire's transportation planning decisions.

The statewide transportation policy proposed by SB 396 will also promote the adoption of sustainable development strategies that provide air and water quality protection benefits, as well as increased protection of natural resources such as open space and wildlife habitat. Sustainable transportation development projects would be fostered by the provisions in SB 396 that require transportation investments to be consistent with the state's smart growth

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policy (RSA 9-B) and state development plan (RSA 9-A), encourage coordination of local land use policies and planning, and require state planners to advance projects that implement a balanced, multi-modal, energy-efficient transportation system. Careful consideration of these policies during the planning process will result in the selection of effective transportation solutions that help to protect New Hampshire's environmental resources and quality of life.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 396. If you have any questions or need additional information regarding this bill, please contact me at 271-2958 or DES Environmental Quality Impact Planner Carolyn Russell at 271-3010.

Sincerely,



Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Senator Molly Kelly
Senator Martha Fuller Clark
Senator Harold Janeway
Acting Commissioner D. Jeffrey Brillhart